

overhead was surprisingly reminiscent of the nestling chorus of *Alcedo atthis*.

The Bee-eaters' calls appeared to fall into the following groups:—

1. The young ones' food calls — a murmured “joy, joy, joy, joy,—”

2. The “*pirr, pirr . . .*” note given in Serventy and Whittell's *A Handbook of the Birds of Western Australia*. Uttered in rapid succession, these calls are given when one adult flies and perches beside its mate; at the same time both birds raise their bills skywards and shiver their slightly fanned tails from side to side. This call is also given when a Bee-eater drops down to the nest entrance before going inside. The note appears to be primarily associated with courtship and territory. Several variants were noted one of which was written down as “*pirr, blurry, pirr, blurry, pirr . . .*”

3. “*Prrrip, prrip . . .*” Staccato, clear, far-carrying, this is I believe, the alarm note.

4. A quiet “*tip, tip*” or “*tip, tip, chirrah, tip*” with variants, was often heard when a bird was perched and the level of excitement seemed to be low.

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**Comments on Gilbert's Note-book on Marsupials.**—The recent publication of the text of a note-book of John Gilbert's on Australian mammals (Whittell, W.A. *Nat.*, vol. 4, 1954, pp. 104-114) calls to mind a couple of problems associated with Gilbert's Western Australian collections, which are still referred to in present-day works, e.g., Troughton's *Furred Animals of Australia*, 5th (revised) edition, 1954.

The first problem is concerned with Gilbert's description of the nests of the Dunnart, *Smintropsis murina fuliginosa* (Gould) (Whittell, p. 108), which was published by Gould. Troughton (p. 39) summarises Gould's description as follows: “Said to burrow out a cavity and fill it with short pieces of fine twigs and grass, forming a structure from ten to fifteen inches in depth with holes in the top leading to galleries which run out amongst the roots of the scrub, providing means of escape. By accident or design, these nests are precisely similar to structures built by a small species of blaek ant.” There can be little doubt that these structures inhabited by the Dunnart were the nests of ants. *S. murina* has not been recorded as a builder of such nests in any other part of its extensive range or by any other observer. The species of ant which builds the nests is *Iridomyrmex conifer* Forel and it is restricted in its distribution to South-western Australia. It is of interest that as long ago as 1866 Kreff (Proc. Zool. Soc., London, p. 433) recorded that he had been informed by George Masters who had recently returned from a collecting expedition to King George's Sound that this species was “generally found in deserted ants' nests.”

Another problem concerns the type locality of the western race of the Pig-footed Bandicoot, *Chaeropus ecaudatus occidentalis*

(Gould). Gilbert recorded that his two and only specimens came from the "Walyemara district about 45 miles north-east of the Townsite of Northam" (Whittell, p. 111). Gould does not say where the specimens came from but gives the aboriginal names of the animal as recorded by Gilbert, from the York and Walzemara (*sic*) districts. In 1888, Thomas (*Cat. Mars. Monotrem. Brit. Mus.*, p. 252) stated that the type locality of *Ch. occidentalis* was "Boorda, Kirltana, W.A." Authors (e.g., Troughton, p. 78) have given this locality in quotation marks and its geographical position is apparently not known with certainty.

"Boorda" is, of course, the aboriginal name of the animal and Thomas had not realized this fact when transcribing the information on the label of the type specimen. The problem therefore is to find the location of "Kirltana." With the kind assistance of Miss K. C. Cammilleri, a search was made in the Western Australian Archives, and Mr. H. E. Smith, Under-Secretary for Lands, kindly searched the records of the Lands and Surveys Department. No record of "Kirltana" could be found. It was probably a spring but never seems to have been marked on any map.

However, "Walyemara" is placeable. Copies of letters preserved in the W.A. Archives (*W.A.A.*, 53, *Journals of Explorations*) from A. Durlacher, a well-known public servant who at one time was an officer of the Survey Department, to J. S. Roe, Surveyor General, spell the word, which was the name of the spring, as "Wolyumary" (1843) and "Wal-yarc-maury" (1846). Robert Austin (*Journal*, 1855, p. 7) passed through the region in 1854 and described the swampy character of the area. He recorded the name as "Walyourmouring" and described it as a ravine with a granite rock and pools of water. He gave the position of the locality accurately as 10 miles north 3 degrees east from a spring called Goomalling. It is to be noted that this place is north-north-east rather than north-east of Northam. On modern maps (e.g., the *10 Mile Topographical Series*, Dept. Lands and Surveys, Perth) there is a lake in this area called "Walyormouring."

There can be little doubt that this area is also the "Walyema Swamps about forty miles north-east of Northam," which is the type locality of the Broad-faced Rat-Kangaroo, *Potorous platyops* (Gould), the type of which was collected by Gilbert. Gould gives the locality as "Walyema swamps near Northam in the interior," but Waterhouse (*Nat. Hist. Mamm.*, vol. 1, p. 232, 1846) states that the more precise locality given above is written on the label of the type.

Inidentally, Tate (*Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, vol. 91, art. 2, 1948, p. 262) says that the type locality of *P. platyops* is "Walyema Swamps, 40 miles north-east of Latham, Victoria county." How he came to make this error is not apparent. Another error in this paper (p. 273) of interest to Western Australian naturalists is the statement that the type locality of the Rock Wallaby, *Petrogale lateralis* (Gould) is "Liverpool Plains, New South Wales." In actual fact, Gilbert collected the type specimens of this wallaby at "Swan River, Western Australia."

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